THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. (b) Does not arise.

Private investment in Railways

550. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether private investors have been urged to avail of the liberalized policy announced by his Ministry for the faster growth of this sector;

(b) if so, whether his Ministry has taken several measures to upgrade and modernize rail infrastructure;

(c) whether adoption of the liberal policy had resulted in Railways making a record profit of Rs. 13,000 crores in the last financial year and expected to reach Rs. 20,000 crore this year;

(d) if so, whether Railways have already initiated three projects through joint venture; and

(e) to what extent, private sector has shown keenness in investing in Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Railways achieved a pre-dividend internal generation of more than Rs. 13,000 crores in the year 2005-06. The amount is expected to cross the budgeted figure of Rs. 15,250 crores for the year 2006-07.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Several schemes such as Wagon Investment Scheme, running of container trains and luxury tourist trains, etc. aimed at involving private participation in Railway projects have evoked encouraging response.

Dereserving items for small scale sector

551. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a proposal under consideration of Government to dereserve the remaining 326 items for exclusive development of the small scale sector;